

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

September 28, 2006

The Honorable George W. Bush
President of the United States of America
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20050

Dear President Bush:

Thank you for releasing portions of the April 2006 National Intelligence Estimate (NIE), titled "Trends in Global Terrorism: Implications for the United States." We write to strongly urge that you immediately release the NIE in its entirety, making only those redactions of intelligence sources and methods required by law, so that the American people can come to their own conclusions about the terrorist threat facing the United States.

The declassified portions of the report demonstrate clearly that the consensus of intelligence professionals is that the US is more at risk since the invasion of Iraq. According to the report:

"...activists identifying themselves as jihadists, although a small percentage of Muslims, are increasing in both number and geographic dispersion...If this trend continues, threats to US interests at home and abroad will become more diverse, leading to increasing attacks worldwide.

"We assess that the operational threat from self-radicalized cells will grow in importance to US counterterrorism efforts, particularly abroad but also in the Homeland.

"The Iraq conflict has become the "cause celebre" for jihadists, breeding a deep resentment of US involvement in the Muslim world and cultivating supporters for the global jihadist movement.

"Anti-US and anti-globalization sentiment is on the rise and fueling other radical ideologies...The radicalization process is occurring more quickly, more widely, and more anonymously in the Internet age, raising the likelihood of surprise attacks by unknown groups whose members and supporters may be difficult to pinpoint."

Despite the assessment of the intelligence community that Iraq war is fueling terrorism, you and your Administration continue to make claims to the contrary. For example, as recently as this past September 11, you stated, "The world is safer because Saddam Hussein is no longer in power."

In declaring your intention to declassify part of the NIE, you denounced the prior leak of the intelligence assessment as being done for "political purposes." However, releasing just a portion of the NIE smacks of exactly that kind of political use of classified information, especially given that your Administration appears to have done so before. In the fall of 2002, your Administration made public only portions of a NIE on Iraq's weapons of mass destruction, omitting key caveats about the veracity of the information – concerns that proved well-grounded when no WMD were found in

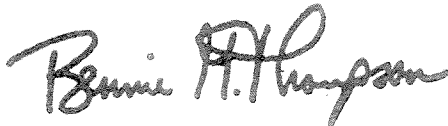
Iraq. That selective release of information has given the appearance that the Administration kept vital information from Congress and the American people during the debate over the wisdom of taking military action against Iraq. Likewise, the release of only these key judgments will lead to speculation that your Administration has kept even more damaging material under wraps.


Mr. President, you have the opportunity to avoid another such blow to your credibility and, by extension, that of the US. By making public the entire NIE, you have a chance to clarify exactly what the intelligence community believes is the state of the global terrorist threat, and give Americans an opportunity to evaluate that assessment for themselves.

Given that we are locked in a struggle with a vicious, determined, and adaptable enemy, it is important that national security decisions are based on facts, rather than political spin. The people of this country deserve to know whether the choices their government has made in Iraq and elsewhere have truly made them safer. We urge you to release the entire NIE immediately.

Sincerely,

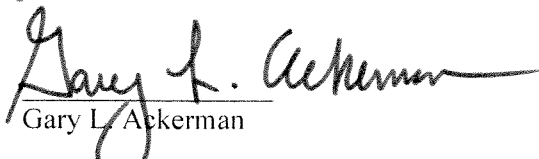

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Bennie G. Thompson

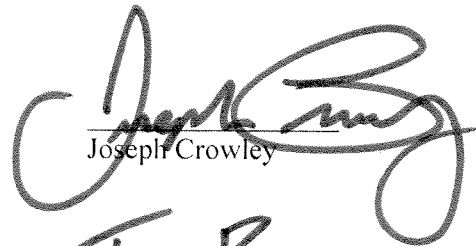

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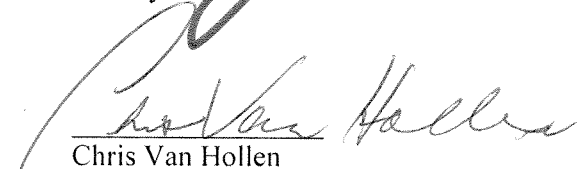

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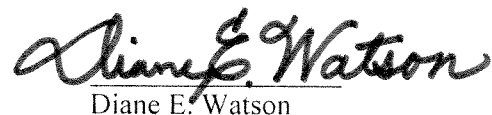

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Tim Ryan

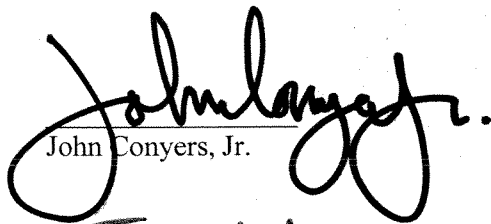

Chris Van Hollen

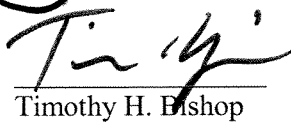

Tom Lantos

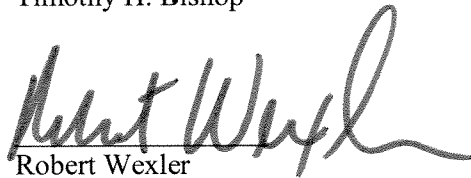

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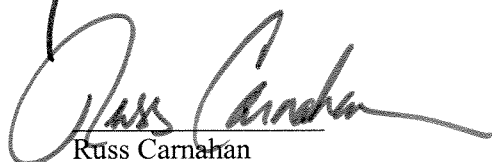

Robert Wexler

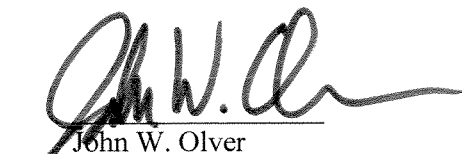

Howard L. Berman

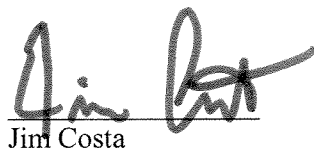

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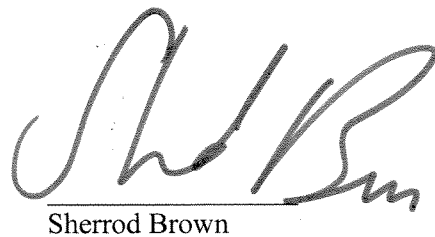

Barney Frank


Bob Filner

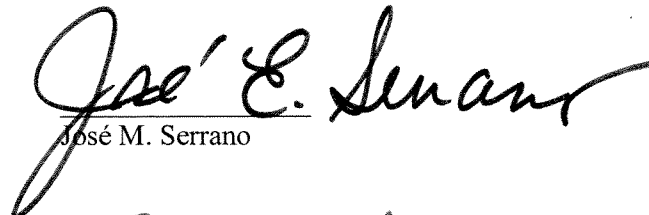

Russ Carnahan

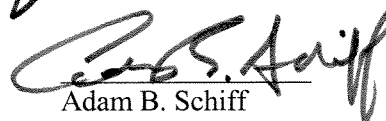

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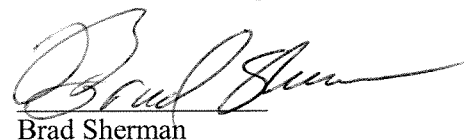

Sherrod Brown

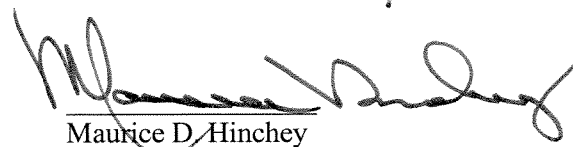

Rahm Emanuel



José M. Serrano

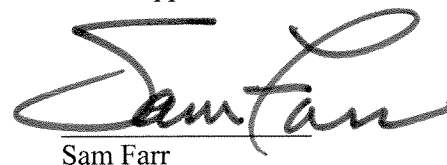

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